

Our Listing on the National Website

Canterbury Underwater Club 1954-2004



Canterbury Underwater Club motto: "Cum salute sub undis" means "with safety under the waves", the thoughts of the ten people present at a March 10, 1954 meeting to discuss the formation of an underwater swimming club. The April 4 meeting saw a total of 46 persons committed to CUC (Canterbury Underwater Club) formation.

Fifty years on, in April 2004, the Canterbury Underwater Club celebrated a half-century of exploration, innovation and adventure. The following selection of excerpts from the club's anniversary program testament to just what they've got up to over the years. We say congratulations and here's to the next 50.

The submarine built by Don McClimont & Roy Jones using a drop tank from a Vampire jet, the first trial at the Groynes had an anticipating, awaiting number of Club members, "Don and I were both seated inside with scuba gear and seat belts, several divers supported the sub, however, we didn't anticipate the startup current, the load was so great it welded the switch contacts together, we hurtled across the river into the elodea weed on the other side, hopelessly tangled we desperately tried to stop the motor!"

Speaking of fishing - a trio of fisher members ventured out in rough waters off Banks Peninsula, fisher A was feeling unwell and lost sight of his breakfast and teeth over the side just as fisher B was hauling up a large cod. On landing his fish fisher B substituted his own dentures placing in the cod's mouth, exclaiming, "look A the fish has your teeth". Fisher A removes them from the fish, wipes and places them in his mouth, "ugh he explodes, these aren't mine" and promptly throws them into the water!



Win Christie (left), longest serving member of the Canterbury Underwater Club receives, on behalf of the club, an NZUA Recognition Award for 50 years of diving activities from Alan Warner (representing NZUA) at the 'Meet the Founders' cocktail party.

In November '73 a motion was passed that "CUC coordinate the fund raising and construction of a recompression chamber to be sited in a Christchurch Hospital". Richard Lowen lead a team that negotiated with various government departments the legal and structural requirements for this pressure vessel and the building of the same. There was much fund raising, support coming from all NZ diving clubs, local bodies etc, charities. The chamber was installed and running in Princess Margaret Hospital in '79.

Source: CUC Anniversary Program, Win Christie